

and compassion for those who have suffered. I am very impressed, Mr. Secretary, by how quickly we have responded and the assets that you have ordered deployed to help these people. And there's a lot of talk about how some in the world don't appreciate America. Well, I can assure you that those who have been helped by our military appreciate America.

We also talked about the war on terror. We're constantly reviewing our strategy as to how to defeat the enemy—fully recognize that the war on terror will require a coordinated effort within our own Government as well as a coordinated effort with the countries around the world which understand the stakes of this war. I am pleased with the response from around the

world, appreciate so many nations understanding that we must work together to defeat these killers. I'm mindful of the fact that we have—constantly have got to review our plans and never lose our will.

So, Mr. Secretary, thanks for the briefing. It was a very good briefing, and you're doing a fine job on behalf of the American people.

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. Thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:21 a.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Thomas B. Fargo, USN, commander, U.S. Pacific Command.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 *January 13, 2005*

Dear _____ :

Consistent with section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-114) (the "Act"), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond February 1, 2005, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard G. Lugar, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and Jerry Lewis, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks in a Discussion at Florida Community College at Jacksonville in
Jacksonville, Florida
January 14, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for having me. [Laughter] It's an honor to be here. I—it's kind of nice to be introduced by your brother. [Laughter] I'm real proud of Jeb. I asked Jeb to take on an important assignment, and that is to travel to the countries that had been hit by the tsunamis. He went with Colin Powell. I couldn't think of two better representatives of the United States of America to show the compassion and heart of the people of the United States of America.

For those of you who have given your hard-earned dollars to help the victims, I want to thank you for that. I also want to remind you, there's a lot of other work to be done at home and around the world. Please don't let your gift to help the tsunami victims shortchange other vital programs to help feed the hungry and to provide comfort for those who have been—those who need help.

And so Jeb, thanks for doing a good—looking forward to seeing you in Washington here pretty soon. They'll turn down the bed for you. [Laughter]

I—Steve, thanks for having me. I'm really looking forward to talking about the importance of the community college system in the United States and in Florida to help make sure that we train people for jobs. That's what we're here to talk about, how to help people improve their lives. And the community college system is a vital part of a hopeful America. So thanks for having me.

I want to thank all the folks who teach here. I want to thank the folks who put up with my entourage. [Laughter] It's quite large these days. [Laughter]

I'm proud to be traveling in the limo today with Mel Martinez, the new United States Senator. I flew down today with

Ander Crenshaw, the fine United States Congressman. And also, the mayor came out to say hello. And I appreciate the mayor. Mayor Peyton, thanks for joining us. I appreciate you coming.

So there I was with the Senator, the Congressman, the mayor, and the Governor, and guess what we talked about? [Laughter] We talked about the importance of Jacksonville, Florida, to the security of the United States of America. And I appreciate so very much the very strong presentation these leaders made about the importance of Mayport. I listened very carefully. I know full well that Jacksonville is the home port that most in the United States Navy want to be based at. I fully understand the importance of Mayport and the Navy to the economy of Jacksonville, Florida.

I want to thank you, Mr. Mayor, for your willingness to take time out of your schedule to brief me on the realities of the situation here. And I'll take your message back to Washington, DC.

I want to thank John Winn, the commissioner of education from this great State of Florida. Just do what the Governor tells you to do. I want to thank—[laughter]—isn't that what you told me to say, Jeb? [Laughter] I want to thank David Armstrong, who's the chancellor of the Community Colleges and of Workforce Education. I want to thank all the State and local officials who are here. I want to thank our panelists. I think you're going to find some interesting stories here. I'm going to try to tell you something about education. They can tell you firsthand what is—some of them can tell you firsthand what it's like to go to school at the community college. I think you're going to find it fascinating. I certainly did, during our discussion.